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Bi-Centennial
Souvenir
New Castle
New Hampshire

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BI-CENTENNIAL SOUVENIR

—
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NEW CASTLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

COMPILED BY

CHESTER B. CURTIS.

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INTRODUCTION.

This little book is, necessarily, a hasty compilation. Its first object is to preserve, in tangible form, a record of our bi-centennial celebration, together with a few facts, culled from history, bearing more or less directly upon this event. Furthermore, it is intended to convey to absent sons and daughters an idea of the New Castle of to-day.

Our social position acquired during the past decade, necessitates a brief statement of our present flourishing condition. It is hoped the numerous illustrations will supply that which is lacking in the few paragraphs here given. To Mr. John Albee, the compiler expresses his appreciation of the use of "New Castle, Historic and Picturesque," from which a part of the following extracts are taken, some verbatim. Also to those citizens who have contributed the illustrations, and to the authors of the literary exercises of the day, the compiler expresses his thanks.

C. B. C.

OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF NEW CASTLE.

SELECTMEN.

FRED BELL, *Chairman.*

AMBROSE CARD.

CHARLES H. BECKER.

HOWARD M. CURTIS, *Clerk and Treasurer.*

COMMITTEE ON CELEBRATION.

WILLIAM EDWARD MARVIN, *President.*

EXECUTIVE BOARD.

JOHN ALBEE, *Chairman.*

CONRAD PUSH.

FRED BELL.

AMBROSE CARD.

CHARLES H. BECKER.

MOSES R. CURTIS.

CONRAD PUSH.

CHESTER B. CURTIS,

Secretaries.

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME.

Ringling of bells.

6 A. M.,

12 M.,

6 P. M.

National salute fired from Fort Constitution.

11 A. M. Procession and Flag-raising.

Speech at Grammar School by Col. T. E. O.
MARVIN.

Speech at Primary School by ——— ———

EXERCISES AT FORT CONSTITUTION.

Address of Welcome.

FRED BELL, Chairman of Selectmen.

Address by JOHN ALBEE, Chairman of Executive Board.

Oration by FRANK WARREN HACKETT.

1 P. M. Dinner in Stone Shed.

2 P. M. SPORTS.

10-oared boat race.

New Castle, Portsmouth, and Kittery

Point crews.

Bicycle race.

Potato, obstacle, and sack races.

100-yards dash.

Yacht race by Piscataqua Yacht Club.

7 P. M. Band concert.

Bonfire, fire-works.

Music furnished by the Dover Cornet Band.



NEW CASTLE, FROM CLARK'S ISLAND.

NEW CASTLE, N. H.

It is difficult to separate the history of New Castle from the general affairs of the Province of New Hampshire in the early times. We may naturally claim whatever transpired here, as the building of forts, the entry and clearance of vessels, the residence of governors, and the meetings of councils and assemblies, as a part of the town's history. New Hampshire has forgotten that story; or, when she remembers, is apt to locate it at Portsmouth. The fact is, that the settlement of New Castle was prior to that of Portsmouth; and that for the first seventy-five years it was the capital of the province, and two thirds of the provincial officials were citizens of the town.

There are two aspects, two periods, that chiefly make the history of New Castle interesting: the first is the town as the centre of all the principal events of the earliest provincial period; the other is when, left only to its own local affairs, it gradually became insular, clannish, and peculiar. In regard to the causes of its early importance and subsequent obscurity, they were altogether natural. As soon as the colonists found out what were likely to be the natural resources and business of this part of New England, they planted themselves on this island, directly at the mouth of the

Piscataqua, where the facilities for maritime affairs, for fisheries and Indian trade, were most convenient. But in those days it was necessary to protect your property and your person by defences of some sort at exposed points. Now an island affords the most natural and easiest opportunities of defence. The form of this island was already that of a fort, very nearly square, with jutting points of land at the four angles, like bastions. Rude fortifications were early built on these four corners, which immediately gave the island still more the appearance of a great coast defence. The first was constructed by Capt. Walter Neale, between 1630 and 1640, at Fort Point. It was the duty of New Castle to keep a constant guard at the main Fort or Castle, of from four to six men; and also a watchman on Jaffrey Point, and one or two in the vicinity of the free bridge. On this account the town was generally exempted from the levies for other military duty. New Castle was the pet of the province; looked upon as a common possession, a barrier town, a place of refuge in case of extreme danger or disaster. So much for the military situation.

No actual local government, independent of the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, was put in operation in New Hampshire before 1680-'81, so that there is very little doubt the very first representative body ever convened in the state was at New Castle. The date of the first Council meeting is "Great Island, January 15, 1683," and every one of its meetings was here until the year 1697. All the members of this first recorded Council, including the governor, Edward Cranfield, lived at New Castle.

Their first meetings were in the private houses of some of its members. The Jaffrey cottage, now owned and occupied by John Albee, Esq., and the residence of Jotham Emery, Esq., formerly the Province House, have been the scenes of these assemblies.

New Castle became a port of entry about 1686; and for one hundred years thereafter the shipping interests



THE JAFFREY COTTAGE, OWNED BY JOHN ALBEE, ESQ.

were extensive. In the olden time, merchant vessels carried guns, and often as many as the old fort mounted. But the little fort sent a shot across the bows of any vessel which had not paid its dues, and if the vessel submitted, she was obliged not only to pay them, but also the cost of said shot.

From 1682 to 1693 several petitions were offered

by the people of this island for a township charter ; but, being opposed by Portsmouth, as well as by the dwellers of Sagamore creek, it was not granted. For some years before 1693 the people had refused to pay any tax assessed by Portsmouth ; and at length the Governor and Council decided that such assessment was illegal. Having obtained this important conces-



THE OLD BOS'N ALLEN HOUSE.

sion, the procuring of a charter was no longer difficult, and followed almost immediately. The first vote was taken 17th March, 1693, and was a tie on the part of the Council, but Lieutenant-Governor Usher decided it by voting yea. When the matter came up again, the grant meanwhile having been prepared and engrossed, there was but one dissenting vote upon its being

signed and executed by the lieutenant-governor. So on the 30th day of May, 1693, Great Island became "a Towne Corporate, by the name of New Castle, to the men and inhabitants thereof forever," on the payment to the king, or his successors, yearly, on the 20th October, of one peppercorn.

The following is a transcription of probably the oldest New England royal charter which has been preserved. The parchment is uninjured, and the writing is still easily decipherable :

CHARTER OF THE TOWN OF NEW CASTLE.

William and Mary, by the Grace of God, of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, King and Queen, Defenders of the Faith, &c., to all people to whom these presents shall Come Greeting. Know yee that Wee of our especiall Grace, certain knowledge, and meer motion, have Given and Granted And by these presents as farr as in us lyes, Doe give and Grant to our beloved Subjects, Men and Inhabitants, within and upon Great Island, within our Province of New Hampshire, in New England, and the lands to them belonging, Running from a point of Land there on the South side of Saggamores Creek, called Sampson's point, and from thence Southwest by the outside of the fenced land of Saggamores Creek to the head of Aaron Moses field to an old Hemlock Tree by the side of the Road way, and from thence upon the aforesaid Southwest point to the Road way, between Sandy Beach and Greenland, leaving Greenland about three miles to the Westwards soe forwards upon the same point to Hampton Bounds, and then East to the Sea, that the same be a Towne Corporate by the name of New Castle to the men

and Inhabitants thereof forever. And Wee doe by these presents Give and Grant unto the said Men and Inhabitants of our towne of New Castle, all and every, the streetes, lanes and highways within the said Towne, for the Publique use and service of the Men and Inhabitants thereof and travellers there, together with full power, lycence and authority to the said men and inhabitants within the said town forever, to establish, appoint, order and direct the establishing, making, laying out, ordering amending and repairing of all streetes, lanes, highways, ferry places and Bridges, in and throughout the said Towne, necessary, needful and convenient for the Men and Inhabitants of the said towne, and for all travellers and passengers there: Provided always that our said Lycence soe as above granted for the establishing, making and laying out of streetes, lanes, highways, ferry places, and Bridges, be not extended or constructed to extend to the taking away of any person or persons Right of Property without his, her, or their consent, or by some knowne law of our Province: To have and to hold and enjoy, all and singular, the premisses aforesaid, to the said Men and Inhabitants of the said Towne of New Castle and their successors forever, Rendering and paying therefore unto us, our heirs and successors, or to such other office or officers as shall be appointed to receive the same yearly, the annual quitt rent or acknowledgement of Owne Peppercorn in the said Towne, on the five and twentieth day of October, yearly, forever. And for the better order, rule and government of the said Towne Wee doe by these presents Grant for us and our successors, unto the men and inhabitants of the said Towne, That yearly and every year upon the first Tuesday of March, forever, they, the said men and inhabitants of our said Towne shall elect and choose by the major part of them, two sufficient and able men, householders in the said Towne, to be Constables to the next Quarter Sessions of the

Peace, to be held for the said Province, there to take the accustomed oaths appointed by Law for the Execution of their offices, under such penaltyes as the Law of our said Province shall appoint and direct upon refusall or neglect therein. And Wee doe by these presents Grant for us, our Heirs and successors, unto the men and Inhabitants of the said Towne, That yearly and every year upon the said first Tuesday of March, forever, they, the said men and Inhabitants of our said Towne, or the major part of them, shall elect and choose three men, Inhabitants and householders, within our said Towne, to be overseers of the poor and highways, or selectmen for our said Towne, for the year ensuing, with such powers, priviledges and authorities as any overseers or selectmen within our said Province have and enjoy or ought to have and enjoy. And wee doe further by these presents Give and Grant for us, our Heirs and successors, unto the men and inhabitants of the said Towne and their successors, forever, That they shall have and enjoy the use of the Ferry the days of the Fairs of New Castle, aforesaid, forever, to be held there every Wednesday, and one Fair for two dayes, to witt, on the first Tuesday and Wednesdayes of July, forever, together with all issues and profits to the said Market and Fair accrewing or happening, and all liberties and free customs, priviledges and emoluments to the said Market and Fair belonging or appertaining: To have and to hold said Market and Fair with issues and profits and liberties and free customs priviledges and emoluments to the same or either of them accrewing or happening, belonging or appertaining to the said men and Inhabitants of our said Towne of New Castle and their successors, forever.

In testimony whereof Wee have caused the Seal of our Province to be hereunto affixed.

Witness, John Usher Esqr., our Lievetennt. Governor and Commander in Chiefe of our said Province at our

said Towne of New Castle, the thirtyeth day of May, in the fifth year of our Reigne, Annoque Domi 1693.

Jn. Usher.

By the Lievt. Governours Command
Theo. Davis Sec'ry.

“In regard to the name of the town, there is no positive proof of its origin. It would be most natural



PORTCULLIS AT FORT CONSTITUTION.

to suppose it was borrowed from an English place, name, or from the baronial title. But this Province had no association with the English New Castle; and it was not until long after that any duke of New Castle became connected with American colonial affairs.

“Having eliminated those two sources of the probable origin of the name, what have we left? Only this:

that, in common allusions to the fort, it was often called 'The Castle,' and had its first distinctive name of Fort William and Mary not until one year after the incorporation of the town, that is, in 1694. It was then so named, probably, because about 1692 the king made the colony a present of some great guns, which were mounted on the old fort. In addition to this new ordnance, the fort was at about the same time repaired.

"My argument then," says John Albee, "is simply this: The fort had been called and known for a long period as 'The Castle;' at the date of incorporation, it was furnished with new guns and substantially rebuilt, becoming a *new castle*. What more natural presumption, under these circumstances, than that the citizens and officials should give to the words constantly on their lips, the dignity of capital letters, New Castle, and thus establish a name, significant of the town's military importance—'the key,' or 'castle' as they always called it, of the province."

With the exception of a few years during the Revolutionary period, our town records are now complete. Until 1873, the records from 1693 to 1726 were missing. In the autumn of this year, the postmaster, Howard M. Curtis, Esq., received a letter from Mr. Henry Starr, of London, informing him that one of his neighbors, a Captain Bokenhan of Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, had in his possession two volumes of the town records of New Castle.

The letter was cautiously answered, and the reply was the volumes themselves, by the next English mail. They proved to be our long-lost records of the

first thirty-three years of the town's corporate existence, in perfect preservation. The town, at its next annual meeting (March, 1874), passed a handsome vote of thanks to the gentlemen who had discovered and presented the volumes, which was engrossed on parchment and forwarded to them in due time.

New Castle was the scene of the first important aggressive armed action of the Revolutionary patriots.

Before Paul Revere's ride to Lexington and Concord, he had taken a much longer one, if not as celebrated. On the 13th of December, 1774, he rode express from Boston to Portsmouth, dispatched by the Boston Committee of Safety, to inform the similar organization in Portsmouth of the new order of the British, that no gunpowder or military stores should be exported to America. No doubt this information was coupled with advice to secure the gunpowder at Fort William and Mary, before the arrival of a large garrison, reported also, by Paul Revere, to be on its way. Therefore, the next night, or next day, (the 14th), the Portsmouth "Sons of Liberty," with the patriots of New Castle, in all about four hundred, under Maj. John Sullivan and Capt. John Langdon, proceeded to the fort by water, as there was then no bridge, invested it, and summoned Capt. John Cochran and his five soldiers to surrender. However, it was not the officers and men, nor yet the fort they came for, but its one hundred barrels of powder, which they carried away and secreted under the Durham meeting-house. The subsequent history of this powder is equally interesting with its capture, for most of it was used at Bunker Hill, being carted there by oxen all

the way from Durham town, just in season to be served to the soldiers on the eve of engagement ; and the last ounce of it was fired in 1800 from the shotgun formerly belonging to Sir William Pepperell, and found as fatal to the Madbury gray squirrels as it had been to King George's red-coats.

The Martello Tower, a little west of the fort, is the most picturesque object in New Castle. It is built on the ridge of a high ledge, anciently called Jourdan's Rocks. Artists have painted it, and poets love to relate its story, relying upon each other for imaginary embellishments. Its date is so recent, and its history so small, that it is almost necessary to invent some facts in order to properly celebrate so rare a ruin. The annals say that the Tower was built during the last war with England, and when an immediate attack was expected by an English fleet. Its purpose was to guard more effectually the so called Town Beach, to the south, from landing parties, and to reinforce the batteries of Fort Constitution. It was planned and constructed under the care of Colonel Walbach, whose name it has always borne. He was a German count, who had seen service in the Prussian army and had fought against Napoleon in twenty-six battles.

He was long in the service of the United States, and in command of Fort Constitution from 1806 to 1821. Colonel Walbach summoned the company of sixty men under Captain Marshall, who garrisoned the earth-works on Jaffrey's Point, at the eastern end of New Castle, to assist his own soldiers in building the tower ; and all the citizens of the town also aided. It was rapidly completed ; but no enemy appeared, and soon

the tower grew a ruin. It is so small as to suggest a fortification in miniature or model, rather than for actual use. It is the size of the round towers of the Middle Ages; and on this account, perhaps, appears of greater antiquity—of the age the imagination easily renders it. Walbach Tower is of brick; the terreplein was of peat, which has become like grassy turf. The



WALBACH TOWER.

tower is difficult of access now, as the entrance is obstructed by fallen bricks and mortar. Within is a rude pintle-stone, on which to swing a thirty-two pounder. There are three casemated embrasures for small cannon or muskets, in case of assault; and a Lilliputian magazine.

One feels that if it has not a legend it ought to have.

THE LEGEND OF WALBACH TOWER.

(NEW CASTLE, N. H., A. D. 1814.)

If you should turn your feet from yonder town,
Intent to bathe your eyes with healing sight
Of open sea, and islands rising through,
Mere heaps of shattered ledge that have outstood
Eternal storm, though gray, defiant still,
The river shows the path that you must go;
Its stream engrails the shores of twenty isles,
And pleasant is the way as is its end;
For you will idle on the bridges three,
And loiter through the ancient village street,
That crowns the harbor mouth. Then you will come
To beaches hard, and smoothed by each new tide
Rolling between the low, port-cullised rocks,
Rocks bare a-top, but kirtled at the feet
With sea-weed draperies that float or fall,
As swells or sinks the lonely, restless wave.
There, just above the shore, is Walbach Tower,
Its crumbling parapet with grass and weeds
O'ergrown, and peaceful in its slow decay.
Old people always tell strange tales to us,
A later race—always old tales are strange.
And seems the story of this ancient tower
A marvel, though believing while I hear,
Because who tell it do believe it true.
Three English ships lay under Appledore,
And men in groups stood on the rocks, intent
If they the fort could mean to cannonade,
Or land along the coast and inland march
To sack and burn the wealthy Portsmouth town.
The morning dawned and twice again it dawned,
And still the hostile ships at anchor swung;
But now a rumor ran they meant to land;
At once brave Walbach was resolved to build
A tower which all the beaches should command,
And mount thereon his sole tremendous gun.
He summoned all the villagers at dusk

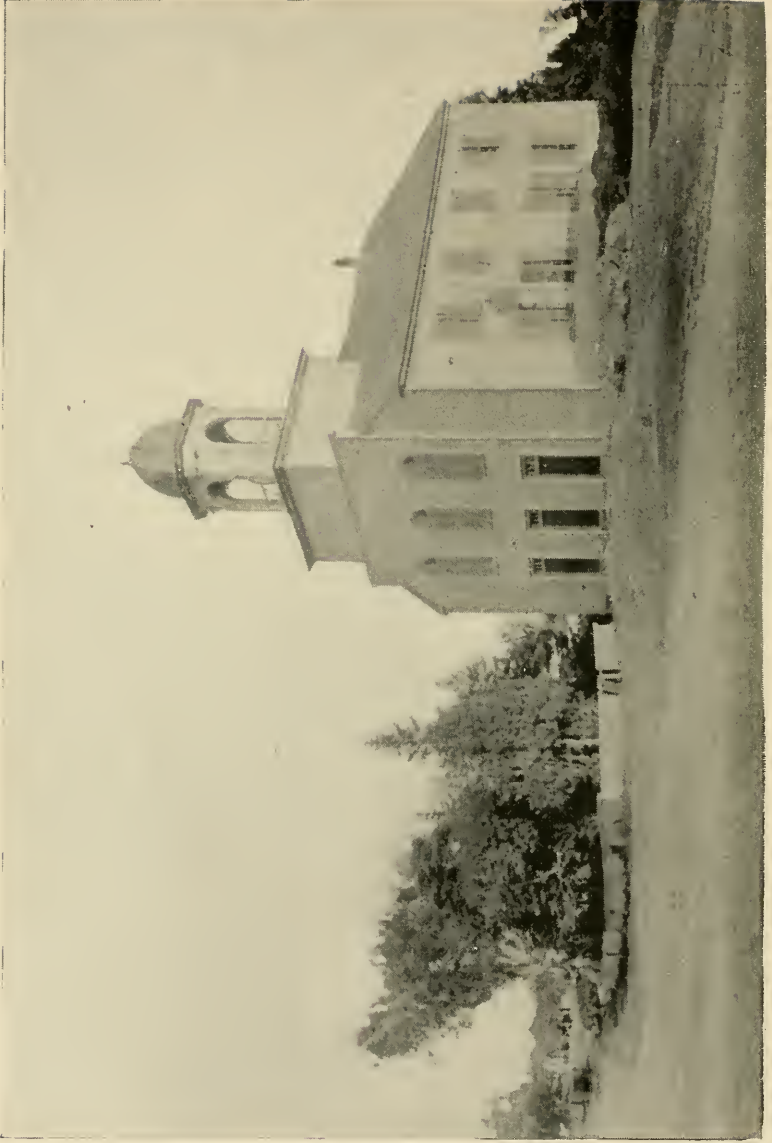
Of one September Sunday, when the days
 Are shortening and the nights are bright and cool.
 Men came and boys, and with them women came,
 Whose dauntless mothers helped our fathers win
 In that rebellious time against the king,
 The freedom which, forgetful of its cost,
 We toss to any hand raised o'er the crowd,
 And pushing hardest, or with loudest voice.
 They wrought as never men and women wrought,
 And in one night the tower completed rose.
 But lo, the miracle ! for unseen hands
 Alternate with the mason's dextrous craft,
 As voice repeats and catches up the voice
 In song, laid on the workmen every course
 Another course, and they no presence saw,
 But thought they heard the chiming trowels ring.
 The morning glimmer showed that labor done
 For which two nights were counted scarce enough ;
 Then well their awed but joyful hearts confessed
 Some present deity their champion friend,
 To whom they knelt upon the dewy grass,
 As in the east, the sun returning, built
 A tower of gold along the ocean floor,
 And offered up subdued and grateful praise.
 The hateful ships approached the river mouth,
 Stood off and on and tacked about ; at last,
 Firing a gun to stern, they sailed away.

Still stands the tower. Long may it stand, disused !
 Without a blow, one foe it put to flight,
 And when another comes it will arise
 And in its ruins keep its legend good.
 For while I told this tale one summer night,
 Leaning a weary head on fondest breast,
 We heard the sea-maids on the outer rocks
 Splash in the falling tide, and dimly saw
 What seemed their tresses, undulating there ;
 And felt, around, below, above, the power,
 Not human, but the help of human hands,
 When set to labor in some noble cause.

New Castle is not without its story of witchcraft, though that supposed practice never flourished extensively in New Hampshire. Here is given a title page of a rare pamphlet published in London by Richard Chamberlain, at one time a guest of George Walton, whose house was the scene of action.

Lithobolia: or, the Stone-throwing Devil. Being an Exact and True Account (by way of Journal) of the various actions of infernal Spirits, or (Devils Incarnate) Witches, or both: and the great Disturbance and Amazement they gave to George Walton's Family, at a place called Great Island, in the Province of New Hampshire in New England, chiefly in throwing about (by an Invisible hand) Stones, Bricks and Brick-bats of all sizes, with several other things, as Hammers, Mauls, Iron-Crows. Spits, and other domestic Utensils, as came into their Hellish Minds, and this for the space of a Quarter of a Year. By R. C. Esqr., who was a sojourner in the same Family the whole Time, and an Ocular Witness of those Diabolick Inventions. The Contents hereof being manifestly known to the Inhabitants of that Province, and Persons of other Provinces, and is upon record in his Majestie's Council Court held for the Province. 4to Dedication 2, and pp 16. London: Printed and are to be sold by E. Whitlook near Stationers-Hall. 1698.

Many interesting pages might be written of the early church in New Castle. We learn from records, that as early as 1704 the meeting-house was so old it was ordered sold for 50s. ; and a vote was passed to build a new one. Here is a significant extract from the record of the first town meeting under the charter: The date is December 20, 1693: It was called to be held in ye



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

meeting-house. *Voted*: "A gallery to be made in the lattermost end of the meeting-house for the women to sit in."

We can trace the line of settled clergymen as far back as 1682.

In the Congregational church there is a marble tablet bearing the following inscriptions:

Rev. JOHN EMERSON died Jan. 21, 1732. Aged 62.

Rev. WILLIAM SHERTLEFF died May 9, 1747. Aged 58.

Rev. JOHN BLUNT died Aug. 7, 1748. Aged 42.

Rev. DAVID ROBINSON died Nov. 18, 1749. Aged 33.

Rev. STEPHEN CHASE died Jan. — 1778. Aged 72.

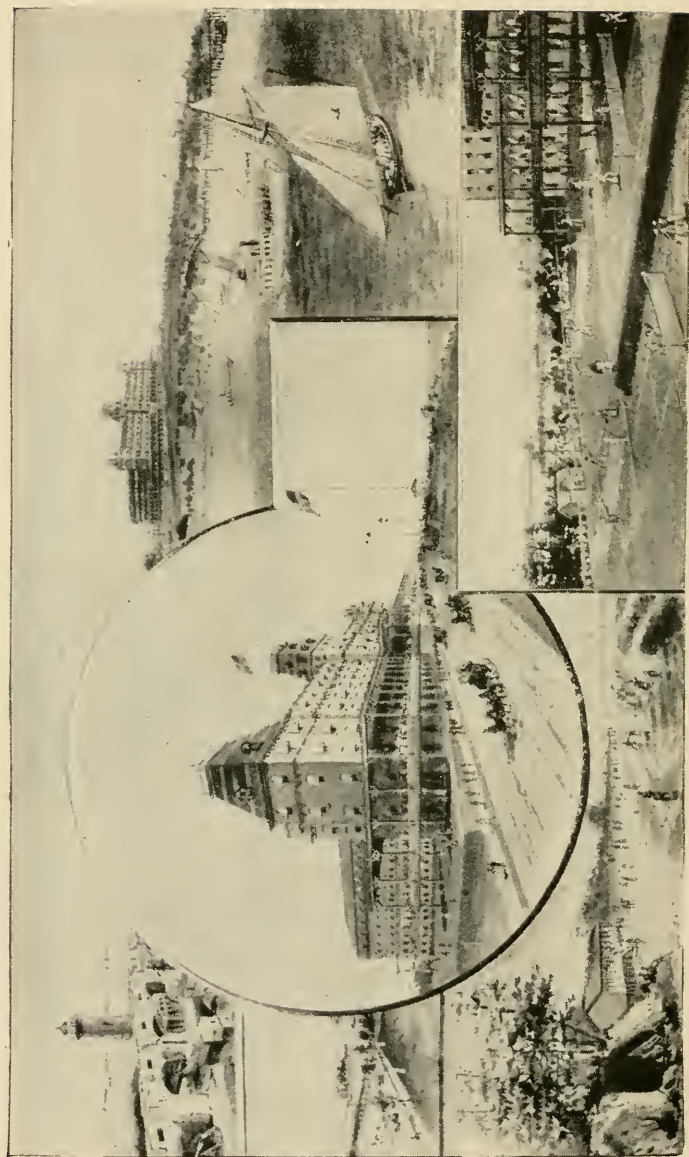
Rev. OLIVER NOBLE died Dec. 15, 1792. Aged 56.

Pastors of this Church.

"The memory of the just is blessed."

The absence of three other names—Moody, Woodbridge, and Jourdon—all preceding Rev. John Emerson in 1703, can be accounted for from the fact that when the tablet was erected in 1852, the early records had not been recovered. Of this list all were graduates of Harvard College except Rev. Oliver Noble, who graduated from Yale. One other name belongs on this tablet: that of Rev. Lucius Alden, who presided over this church from 1846 to 1872. He exerted an influence on our generation that will cause his name to be long remembered. He was a direct descendant of John Alden, but never had the luck to be asked by any Priscilla to speak for himself.

Mr. Alden was a graduate of Brown University.



THE "WENTWORTH."

The New Castle of to-day presents a strange contrast to that of a generation ago. No industry is now carried on here. Our citizens, for the most part employed at the Navy Yard and in Portsmouth, enjoy a suburban residence in this quiet, historic town, very likely to the envy of our city neighbors, who some years ago discovered the natural attractions here presented. New Castle shares, with fifty other places, the distinction of being "the prettiest spot on the coast."

The decline of the fishing industry has left us an inheritance of picturesque bits of scenery that attract artists of reputation to our shores. One summer school of art is now in session, and sketch clubs frequently visit us for a day. The sight of artists flitting about in gay colored costumes, carrying their "traps," or stationed before some newly discovered subject or "scheme of color," is as pleasing to us as to them the finished sketch. The exchange is fair. We enjoy their presence, are reluctant to their departure, and welcome their return.

As a summer resort, New Castle has become known chiefly through the now famous Wentworth House, situated one mile from the village, by the "outalong" road, on the high bluff by the shores of Little Harbor. Under the able management of Mr. William K. Hill, its appointments within and without have been made perfect, and its large patronage, that of the class appreciating metropolitan comfort and luxury at the seashore. A veranda fifteen feet broad extends around the house, from which there is an unobstructed horizon view of over twenty miles. And such a variety of scenery! The immediate surroundings of beautiful

lawns, terraces, and groves; the lagoon and island-dotted Pool, but lead the eye in silent enjoyment to Pawtuckaway and Saddleback mountains, and the Blue Hills of Strafford looking upon us from afar. On clear days, even Mt. Washington may be seen from the towers, ninety miles away to the north. Nearer, but in the same direction, are Kittery Foreside, the Navy Yard, and Mt. Agamenticus, the throne of the great sagamore, Passaconaway. On the northeast you look down on the mouth of the "gay Piscataqua," our compact village on the south bank, flanked by Fort Constitution and the old Walbach Martello tower. On the other side of the river are Kittery Point, the home of Sir William Pepperell, Gerrish Island (containing the cairn of the royal Champernowne), and the long broken coast of Maine. East is the Atlantic ocean and Isles of Shoals six miles distant. Looking southeast you see Ipswich bay, enclosed by the long, slender arm of Cape Ann. In the bend of Ipswich bay are the Rye and Hampton beaches, six and ten miles away. Coming nearer, are Odiorne's Point, the site of Mason Hall,—the first building erected in New Hampshire—and Frost's Point. In front of the hotel and between these two points, is Little Harbor, on whose bank, at its confluence with Sagamore creek, is situated the famous water-side residence of Gov. Benning Wentworth, celebrated in song and story.

New Castle points with pride to the record of its Life-saving Station, manned almost wholly by her citizens. The station, situated on Jerry's Point, was built by the government in 1887, at a cost of \$5,000, and equipped at an equal expense. It was manned in February,

1888, with seven men under Capt. Silas H. Harding, still in charge, and during its five years of service has won the honorable position "No. 1 Station" on the government books at Washington, both in point of successful assistance and in the discipline of the crew. In Captain Harding the government has found the right man for the right place. His whole time and



LIFE-SAVING STATION.

thought are devoted to the improvement and perfection of the service. Every man of the crew is a typical sailor; he is agile, courageous, and courteous, with a strong love for humanity in his big heart.

The life-boat has been manned and assistance rendered forty-four times; and sixteen persons have been taken from wrecks. In several instances, vessels sailing under the British flag have been assisted.

For heroism in saving the crew of a vessel wrecked in the November gale of 1888, each member of the station crew was awarded, by special act of congress, a gold medal valued at \$125. A continuous watch is maintained from September 1 to April 1, and at night, the coast from the station to Fort Point is patrolled by the life-savers. The crew of 1892-3 consisted of Capt. Silas H. Harding, Wm. L. Flynn, T. H. Barber, Isaac Gillis, E. S. Hall, Ernest Robinson, Esrom Corkum, Chas. Prohaska.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

BY MR. FRED BELL,

CHAIRMAN OF BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: The anticipated pleasure of this occasion (to me at least) has been impaired by the thought that I must perform the initiatory act of this, the two hundredth anniversary of our incorporation as a town under a royal charter granted to the men and inhabitants of this place by king and queen, William and Mary of old England in 1693.

And we meet here to-day to commemorate that important event: and,*Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, as chairman of the selectmen, and in the name of the residents of this town, I thank you for your presence here to-day on this occasion, and bid you one and all a hearty welcome; and with a few changes in the phraseology of Samuel Woodworth's "Old Oaken Bucket," may we all say

"How dear to this heart are the scenes of our childhood,
When the bright light of day presents them to view:
The ocean, the ledges, the deep tangled wildwood,
And every loved spot that our infancy knew."

Again bidding you welcome, I will now introduce the chairman of the executive committee, Mr. John Albee.

ADDRESS BY MR. JOHN ALBEE,

CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Our celebration to-day is happily coincident with the Columbian year, and our little local history extends over rather more than half the Columbian period. To-day a procession of two hundred and fifty years moves past us, to be remembered, to be saluted and honored. Generation after generation has come and gone; this day they assemble, reunited and complete. Not a single one of the sons and daughters of New Castle is absent. They pass by pale and speechless, but all are remembered, and I seem to see them return our salute with a smile of recognition and gratitude.

Their annals are brief but in no way obscure. They lived plainly; they wrote clearly and concisely their own story, and acted with integrity and intelligence in their public and private stations. All that to-day we behold living and flourishing is, in nameless ways, derived from them. Theirs, too, are the ruins we find everywhere on this Island; and could we call up from the deep the unnumbered vessels in which they sailed over all seas, the picture of their activities would be complete.

Hail, ancient town! Island home of so many brave, unpolished, stalwart mariners, fishermen, and soldiers!

Here was gathered together the first community in New Hampshire that could be called, with any historical propriety, a community; that organized itself on the basis of law and religion, and furnished itself with the outward symbols of the provincial civilization—a small fort, or Castle, as they loved to call it—a church, within the Castle enclosure, a watch-tower, prison and stocks, several inns, and one after another all the equipments of village order which we inherit, and to which we have not added a single one. Indeed we have lost some and only changed the operation of others. Can you believe that by the mere act of incorporation, in 1693, this town sprang, full-fledged, into being? Not at all. It had been settled more than fifty years, and was, in fact, a place of more importance before incorporation than it has been at any similar period since; so that, although we celebrate to-day a bi-centennial, we distinguish rather a formal than an actual event.

The reason why this place became the first community of any importance in New Hampshire, is not far to seek. It was due to its environment. Its population was necessarily concentrated within very narrow boundaries,—boundaries which the eye here meets in every direction, the bays, the river and ocean, until the Island is reduced to less than one square mile; and mainly over a few acres of this, along the margin of the river, the town arose. Its business was on the water, not agricultural. For this it required little room ashore; room it found

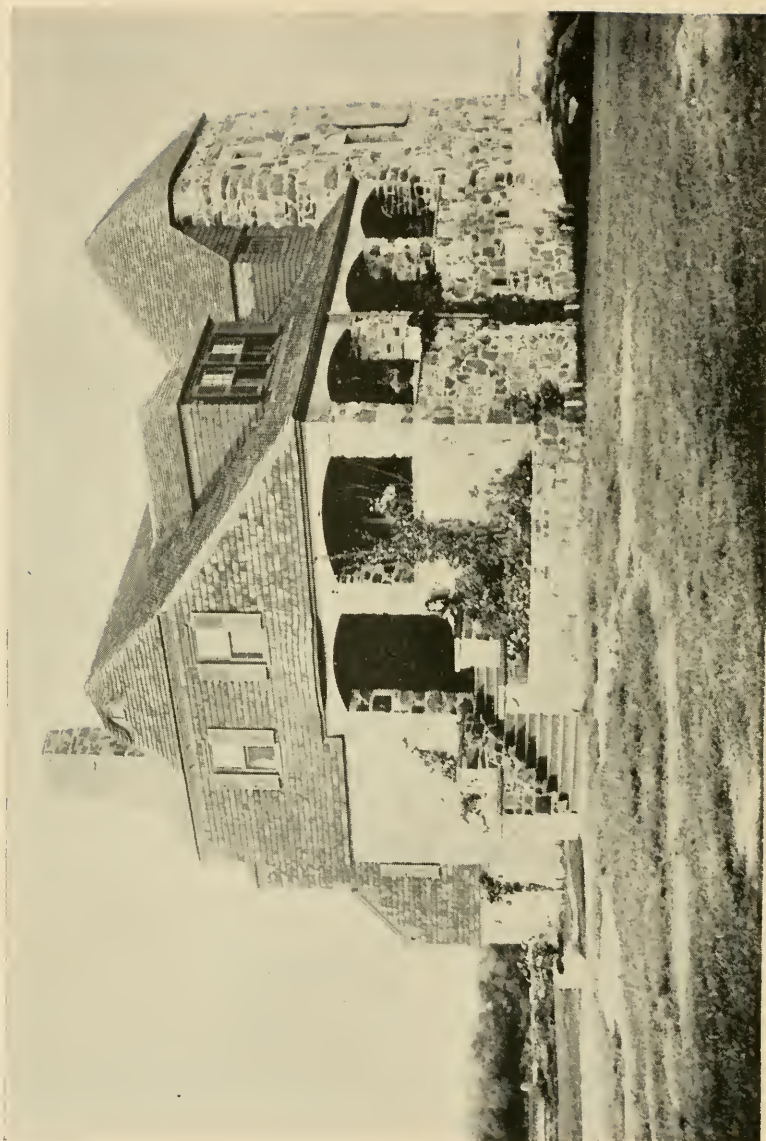
in abundance when its citizens lifted the anchor, spread the sail, and ploughed furrow whose crop was codfish, rum, and molasses. Our ancestors set their houses near together; consequently they sooner needed regulations for the protection of their separate interests than rural and sparse communities. Moreover, this concentration of houses and population, although requiring more minute police regulations—and in these the Castilians were excessively punctilious—led naturally to a closer and more definite community of interests in affairs of greater importance than the garden wall and the height of the chimney.

Here first in the history of New Hampshire, in consequence of close neighborhood, came into being and exercise that terror and safeguard of our later civilization, public opinion. Public opinion was the whole of the law and nearly of the gospel on Great Island at a very early date. Its quaint, first and very significant name was the "Town's Mind." At a very early date we had a public opinion on the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay; on witchcraft, on royal governors, on taxes, and the Mason claims; and within our rocky shores, on the actions of every man and woman; on pigs, salt fish, and staves, and on all the details of daily life. Many of these found a formal, and often pragmatic expression in our ancient documents.

But I must not trespass on the time and topics of the orator of this occasion. Because New Castle is a small island, called in early times Great Island, in comparison to its twenty companions near by, because of the concentration of its inhabitants and their long seclusion, its whole history is unique, picturesque, and romantic beyond that of any New England town known to me. If any one accuses the local historian of using too much color on his palette, let him study our annals and himself become identified with the town for a number of years, and he will become aware how really faint and imperfect is the picture.

Local history is the only important history. In it we come nearer to human life, to man, than in that of empires. Study and interest in it is the source of most civic virtues. It is most fitting, therefore, that we should celebrate its anniversaries, not only for our own enlightenment and inspiration, but in grateful remembrance of our forefathers. If I may be allowed to moralize, I should say that local interest, the love of our own town, and the people among whom God has appointed us to dwell, is, after the great commandment, the beginning of wisdom.

The tides come in, and return again whence they came. As they come in, they fill every nook and cranny in rock and sand. No spot is forgotten, no shore unrefreshed. I suppose no drop of water complains that it must fill some empty shell, or visit some obscure shore and float the boat of an humble fisherman. It knows that it will soon return and become a portion of the infinite sea, an equal sharer in all its grandeur and power. So it is with man. Without his will he is borne on the tides of life to some destined or wholly accidental shore, where without glory or reward he must fill well the place and the duty he finds awaiting him, comforted and sustained by the thought that the same tide which bore him hither will soon restore him to the great central sea of being, where, it is said, if he has been faithful over a few things he will become lord over many.



RESIDENCE OF EDMUND C. STEDMAN.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

By FRANK WARREN HACKETT.

We are met together amid surroundings of no common or ordinary kind. One has only to look about him to see that here is a region where Nature in bestowing her wondrous gift of beauty has held not back her hand. Below us a noble river pours its tide into the Atlantic. Yonder are the Isles of Shoals, while here and there against the sky is to be discerned the white sail of some passing vessel. Do we turn inland, the eye rests upon a varied expanse of water, land, and distant hill,—a picture such as artists love to paint. Close at hand is a snug, little village, smiling with every sign of thrift and comfort. Well may we exclaim, “Lo, a goodly land, that is fair to look upon.”

We are at this moment occupying a spot fertile in historic incident. We stand upon soil early dedicated to the art of war. For more than two centuries and a half (save during certain seasons of neglect), cannon planted here have guarded the harbor entrance of the Pascataqua; or, as the Indian, with an ear for the rich music of the word, pronounced it,—the *Pas-ca-tah-qu*a. To-day these walls of massive granite, but half completed, and these huge, unplaced blocks tell of an ambitious project to sweep beyond the lines of an old fortification, and build a new one of grand proportions. It was the fierce struggle of inventive skill and genius, as applied to the problem of guns afloat and guns on shore, that arrested the enterprise, and of a sudden converted a scene of busy engineering into the stillness of death and decay. But these ruins, we may believe, are for a time only. They presage the rising of a stronghold that shall protect and endure, even as the citadel of our liberties whose name it shall bear, the Constitution.

We are here to greet with festivity and gladness the recurrence of this day. Two hundred long and eventful years of the chartered life of the town of New Castle have run their course. In 1693, William and Mary, of their especial grace, granted to their beloved subjects, men and inhabitants of Great Island, including Little Harbor and what is now Rye (then Sandy Beach), to be a town corporate by the name of New Castle. The royal charter passed the seal of the Province on the 30th day of May of that year. The town was to pay an annual quit-rent of one peppercorn, on the five and twentieth day of October, forever. On the 4th of August, 1693, the Council of

the Province granted leave for an election; but the first town meeting was not held till the 20th of December, following.

As a happy medium between these respective dates, this seventeenth day of August has been set apart to commemorate our anniversary.

We possess records of the town, at periods somewhat defective, that come down to the present hour. The two earliest books once after some mysterious fashion wandered off across the ocean (how many years ago no one seems able to tell), but, like the prodigal, they repented and came home again, to get a warm welcome in 1873. Every son and daughter of New Castle can look through these pages with a feeling that goes some ways beyond complacency, and borders very closely upon pride. If there be little here recorded that has much affected the great world outside, there is on the other hand nothing to be ashamed of. No! If a hardy, resolute, and energetic people, such as have held this island from the first, may not in the course of two hundred years have accomplished something that deserves to be remembered, something for the cause of human progress, something to make the world better for their having lived in it, where else are we to look for annals worthy of preservation?

While New Castle as a town has attained the respectable age of two hundred years, the first settlement here lays claim to a date, sixty or possibly even seventy years earlier. In the spring of 1623, a staunch little ship, the *Jonathan*, of Plymouth, England, cast anchor off yonder point, then called by the Indians "Pannaway," now known as Odiorne's Point, in the town of Rye. She brought from Plymouth Mr. David Thomson, with twelve or fifteen men, to begin a plantation. They built a strong and large house of stone, enclosed it with palisades, and mounted guns within, as a protection against the Indians. Under an agreement with Plymouth merchants, they had come to engage in the fisheries, to traffic in furs, and to build up a colony. Thomson's wife came over with him, or followed in a later vessel. It was the first settlement of what is now the state of New Hampshire. A granite shaft ought to mark the spot. It would stand on ancient territory of the town of New Castle.

There has recently been brought to light a manuscript description of New England, written about 1660 by Samuel Maverick, who settled in 1624, at Winnisimmet, now Chelsea. Maverick was a friend of Thomson's, and the two must have interchanged visits. About 1626, Thomson moved to Boston Bay, where he soon after died. The widow afterwards was married to Maverick. From this source we learn that Thomson, "haveing granted by Patent all the Island bordering on this land to the Midle of the River, he tooke possession of an Island comonly called the great Island." So we know that this territory where we now are came into the possession of Englishmen in 1623. Whether any house was built here for permanent occupation at so early a date, is a matter of conjecture; but that Great Island was then in some way occupied, we can feel assured.

Thomson was doubtless acting in the interest of Gorges and Mason. The plantation, we may believe, was continued after its founder had left it. In 1630, and during the two or three following years, the Little Harbor settlement was increased by the coming of stewards and servants, to the number

of fifty men or more, with their families, sent out by Captain John Mason. Some of them went up the river, where they built the Great House at the Banke,—that is, at Portsmouth, near what is now Court and Water streets. Others went further up to Newichawanneck—now South Berwick. To the site where we are assembled Captain Walter Neal, who was a soldier, and the leader of the band of newcomers, brought cannon, some of which were of brass. Here he planted them, and here he built a strong and substantial work, to command the river. To this they gave the name of Fort Point.

For a period of nearly half a century Great Island maintained the lead,



RESIDENCE OF MRS. ELBRIDGE GERRY.

both in numbers and activity, of the settlements upon this river; and it long remained the place of chiefest importance. Nor is this to be wondered at. Not that the soil was superior—rather the contrary; but here fishing could with most convenience be carried on. Here, too, was security against sudden incursion from hostile savages. Then, again, it is to be remembered that most of the adventurers were west of England men. They came from Cornwall, and from Devon. They loved the sea; they loved to be near it. Strong affection for the familiar scenes of the home they had left may have exercised a controlling influence in the choice they were now to make. The settler may well have preferred to cast in his lot at a place where daily he

could look out over the ocean, ready to catch the first glimpse of a sail that should bring tidings from "merrie England."

To this subtle attraction of the element so potent to shape the life of him that once yields to it, your own poet-historian, Mr. Albee, alludes, with a delicacy of touch that is the pervading charm of his valuable little book. "Fond local attachment," he truly says, "belongs to dwellers by the sea. Nor can they be happy away from their boundless horizon."¹

Travel at that primitive day was accomplished almost exclusively by water. The river was a highway. A ferry was early established to the main land, but scarcely any one here went on horseback. So late as 1680, in a tax-list of fifty-seven estates, one finds only three horses owned upon Great Island. One was the property of George Walton, Senior; the other two belonged to Dermont Usher.

The first grant of land upon Great Island, so far as we now know, bears the date of October, 1637.² Vines, Jocelyn, and Warnerton, as agents of Gorges and Mason, lease, at an annual rent of two shillings, a neck of land lying upon the north-west side of the island, of about one hundred acres, commonly called Muskito Hall,³ to Francis Mathews, and his heirs, for the term of one thousand years. If Mr. Mathews had cherished the purpose of conferring upon his descendants the privilege of living upon an estate thus agreeably described with the opportunity for active enjoyment that its name implies, all at the rate of two shillings a year,—he was doomed to a speedy disappointment, for the land soon passed into other hands.

One wishes that we might be furnished with some particulars in regard to these first settlers of New Castle. You would like, I dare say, to ascertain in just what part of the town this or that remote ancestor of yours had his home lot. What were the incidents that befell him in the round of his simple yet stirring life?

The records to which we would naturally resort for light upon this interesting period, have been destroyed. You will be surprised, when I tell you that they perished, not from fire, or by accident, but at the hands of the selectmen of the town.

One winter's night, five men met at a tavern (or ordinary, as it was then called) kept by George Walton, who had come here, a fisherman, from Newfoundland. The party had with them a volume containing the accumulated records of perhaps seventeen or eighteen years of the infancy of the settle-

¹ New Castle, Historic and Picturesque, by John Albee (Boston, 1884), page 4.

² The salt-marsh around the head of Sagamore Creek early invited occupation. Mr. Francis Williams, chosen governor under a combination for local self-government, which had been entered into about 1633 by Great Island, Little Harbor, and Strawberry Banke, lived on the "Salt Creek." So at least I infer from the record of a deed made by him in 1645. For faithful services as a factor of Mason, a large grant upon Sanders Point had been made to Ambrose Gibbens in 1632. We may safely set down Sanders Point as the earliest English name that has been preserved in this region. It applies to the neck of land upon which the bridge from the Wentworth touches, at its further end.

³ Later called Wotton's Neck. I find it described as Muskito Hall, in court records, as late as 1829. To-day the name is applied to a narrow stretch of water in that vicinity.

ment. Slowly they turned over leaf after leaf of this book, and marked here and there an entry that they thought worth preserving. The rest they crossed out. They voted (for they were the selectmen) to begin a new book of records, into which the town clerk should copy such entries as they had approved. The old book thus dishonored they threw aside. This transaction took place on the night of the 13th January, 1652.

What became of that old town-book, no one knows. It is enough to say that our earliest records at Portsmouth start in 1652,—the result of that night's work at Walton's inn. The entries copied from the old first-book are few and meagre.¹

Time does not admit of my entering upon an explanation of this strange act. It was no secret conclave of conspirators. The leading men of the town in an official capacity were carrying into execution a carefully concerted plan. Suffice it here to say that the procedure was in strict conformity with the methods by which Massachusetts Bay had seized upon this region, and with a rigid hand maintained her jurisdiction. The story of usurpation is all the more difficult to unravel, for the very reason that the Bay authorities did not scruple to make use of the records for their own purposes, nor hesitate to malign those who stood in their path. Until recently New Hampshire history has been written from the standpoint of the Puritan. Perhaps nothing more readily reminds us what that standpoint was, than certain familiar resolutions, with which you are very familiar :

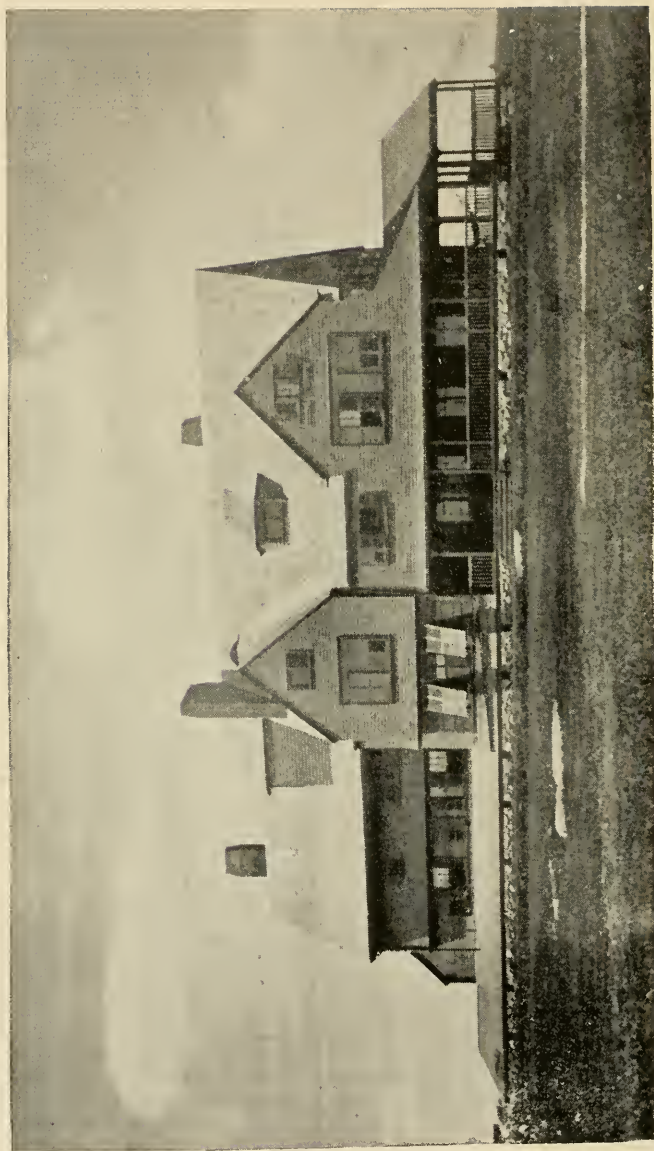
Resolved, That the saints shall inherit the earth.

Resolved, That we are the saints.

It is in no spirit of controversy that I speak of the intolerant traits of character that prevailed among the very worthy leaders who governed our neighboring colony, and were willing to govern us. These men acted according to the light that they had. If they actually believed that a man here who happened to think otherwise than they did, could do so only at the instigation of the devil, we of to-day can stretch out the hand of forgiveness. But the truth of history is to be zealously sought for, and when found, as zealously defended. We may rejoice that a new era has opened before us. The asperity and the rank injustice that marks the pen of the Puritan chronicler is largely shorn of its power for mischief, now that the sources upon which it drew for inspiration are understood and duly estimated.

The prevailing religion among those who first settled here, was that of the Church of England. Mr. Albee has, I think, very satisfactorily shown that there must have been a church here soon after 1640, at which the Reverend Robert Jourdan ministered. Little by little, however, the Puritan faith made

¹ Of late, England has seen a revival of interest in early records, and the kingdom is being searched to discover old documents and papers. The cheapness with which printing can now be done, and the increase in number of those who aim to preserve historic material, both in England and America, combine to make it probable that some originals may yet be brought to light that belong to the annals of our early settlements here. It is by no means unlikely, therefore, that by the next centenary a more accurate and minute account of the inhabitants of Great Island, at their first coming here, can be laid before the audience then to be assembled, than is possible at the present day.



RESIDENCE OF JACOB WENDELL, "FROST-FIELDS."

headway, until at last church worship was abandoned here, and people went to meeting at the Banke. As the town taxed everybody to support the minister, the location of the meeting-house came to play an important part in the life of the town. It was no slight undertaking, especially in winter, to row against wind and tide to Portsmouth. There, on the hill below the south mill bridge, stood a building, described as "of sixty feet by thirty with galleries, a low belfry and a bell, the windows with diamond panes set in lead." Alongside of it were a cage, and a pillory and stocks. To Mr. Nathaniel Fryer, of Great Island, had been accorded the privilege of building next door to the meeting-house, a little cabin, wherein the Fryer family doubtless found it convenient to "fix up," before facing the congregation.

In the many attempts to gain a right to be set off as a separate parish (which eventually resulted in the incorporation of New Castle) one argument pressed by the petitioners was the great hazard and danger of getting their families to meeting. To this Portsmouth neatly rejoined: "We have never heard and hope never shall of any lives lost in attempts to come to meeting. If at any time there should be any danger of that, they well know mercy is to be preferred before sacrifice."

Candor compels the admission that a good deal of staying away from meeting on the Lord's Day was practised in the olden time upon this island.

Nehemiah Partridge, it seems, had a servant named Robert (never mind his family name), whose predilections in this regard have gone into our public archives. Robert stands confessed of record, not only of having a vacant seat charged up against him on several successive Sabbaths, but on "the Sabbath before last Sabbath [so the record runs] he did eat part of two pigs that were roasted at Christopher Kenneston's." The pigs had been stolen, but Robert was not accused of being privy to that enormity. Robert's offence consisted of profanation of the Sabbath, and absenting himself from Mr. Partridge's service. Upon examination before the Worshipful Richard Martyn, of the Council, Robert got sentenced to be publicly whipped upon his naked body nine stripes. Could his Honor have looked down the vista of a century and a half, and caught the full flavor of Charles Lamb's dissertation upon this subject (I do not mean the subject of staying away from meeting—but of roast pig), his sense of judicial duty could scarcely have been tempered with more mercy; for the court suspended execution until Robert should again neglect his master's service, or profane the Sabbath,—“then forthwith to be whipped with nine stripes, as above.”

It is but a step from the meeting-house to the school-house. We do not underestimate here in New Castle the importance of giving to our boys and girls a good, plain, common-school education. That this policy was early determined upon, is apparent from the records.

In March, 1669, the town voted that "a piece of land at Great Island, not exceeding an acre, be sequestered to build a school-house on, and that a school be built on it at the towne's charge, the selectmen Captain Pendleton and Mr. Dering to see it done." The house was accordingly built, and on the 9th May, 1672, liberty was granted to Nicholas Hogkins to swing his ferule within its walls. With your permission, I will read Master Hogkins' letter

of application for this office. It will serve to remind us that the art of preparing one's own recommendation is of no recent origin. We shall also see what happy work that gentleman made of it.

"To the Inhabitants of Portsmouth

"Nicholas Hogkins humbly deaclareth That being by the ordination and providence of God a resident upon the Great Island about 15 months and affecting ye public benefit of ye unlearned and untaught youth heare or adjacent do by your favourable permission countenance and choyce intend to exercise myself in teching those arts with which God hath betrustrued me and with which I may for future be endowed hearby manifesting my respect to obedience of and compliance with the laws and orders of this place either sacred or civill and endeovowing to manifest myself Yo Reall servant

"Nicho Hogkins."

On the 15th March, 1674, is the entry that "upon motion made by Widow Lock to live in the school house on the Great Island in order to the teaching of children to read and sow have granted her desire."

The jurisdiction assumed by the Bay Colony over us, lasted from 1641 to 1679. Forty years of a strong government had wrought a wide-spread change in the condition and the sentiments of the people. Those who were Puritans (some of whom had come here from the Bay) were aggressive and united, backed as they were by the authorities. They alone held the offices, and they had gradually got possession of the land. The Church of England party little by little was pushed to one side; a few yielded, and ranged themselves with the dominant faction.

Upon the restoration of the king to his throne, the opponents of the union with Massachusetts sought redress of their many grievances. Mason's heirs had all along been active against the encroachments of the Bay. To adjust these, and other difficulties, and to capture New Netherland from the Dutch, a fleet of four vessels of war was sent over, with a small force of soldiers. Four royal commissioners accompanied the expedition. On the 20th July, 1664, two ships, the *Martin*, and the *William and Nicholas* put into this harbor. They remained at anchor for a day or two, and then sailed for the rendezvous at Long Island. They took New Netherland, now New York; but the commission accomplished nothing in the way of curbing the power of the Bay Colony. The next year three of the commissioners visited Portsmouth, where some of the people had signed petitions, saying that the Massachusetts had usurped power, and that they were kept from open opposition by fear of fine and imprisonment.

It is a long but a deeply interesting story. I have time only to say that of the strong adherents to the policy of separation, a few lived here at New Castle.

At last, after a struggle of many years' duration, the union of the two colonies was dissolved by order of the king. New Hampshire was erected into a royal province, under a president and six councillors, with an assembly of eleven deputies. The commission was sealed 18 September, 1679. Guns

were fired here upon receipt of the tidings. John Cutt was appointed president; Martyn, Vaughan, and Daniel of Portsmouth, Gilman of Exeter, Hussey of Hampton, and Waldron of Dover, were named as the council. Singular to state, they were every one a firm friend of the Bay Colony. President Cutt lived but a year after taking office. Waldron succeeded him for a short term, when there came upon the stage one of the most restless, strong-willed, and zealous representatives of royal authority that ever crossed the Atlantic.

Edward Cranfield,—who, as his remains lie buried in the cathedral at Bath, probably came from Somerset—is, upon the whole, the most interesting historical personage to whom New Castle may lay claim. Here he lived during the



RESIDENCE OF CAPT. A. H. WHITE.

entire term of his brief service as governor. From almost the day of his arrival he succeeded in plunging our little province into a state of turmoil and excitement, of which this immediate locality was the centre.

Great Island was the court end of the capital of the province. Here, with the advent of the provincial government, sat the council, and here the assembly met. Here, too, the courts of justice tried offenders, and they were kept busy at the work. Here was the jail. The house of Captain Stileman had been devoted to that purpose, and the new governor found opportunity to make not a few leading citizens acquainted with its interior. We came near having a portrait of His Majesty, King Charles, the Second, together

with the royal arms, set up here in fine style, only it so happened that the vessel on which they had been shipped never reached her destination, and the province had to get along without them.

Robert Mason asserted the right of collecting quit-rents of the landholders, in virtue of the patent to his grandfather, Captain John Mason. This claim had all along been bitterly resisted. Mason mortgaged the province to Cranfield for twenty-one years, to secure to Cranfield the payment of £150 for seven years. Mason was made a councillor, and afterwards chancellor. Cranfield's commission as lieutenant-governor passed the seals 9th May, 1682. By another commission from the Duke of York he was made vice-admiral, judge, register, and marshal of the admiralty, with power to appoint substitutes. Upon Cranfield far greater powers were conferred than had been given to his predecessors.

Sailing from Plymouth in the frigate *Lark*, he was nearly seven weeks reaching this coast. The ship put into Salem harbor, 1st October, 1682. The royal governor hurried overland to Portsmouth, where he arrived on the 3d. He was quick and alert. Early the next morning he set about the duty of officially announcing his presence. He took the oath, swore in his council, and issued a proclamation. The *Lark* soon made her appearance. She stayed here till early in January. The governor at first established quarters at the house of Captain Walter Barefoote. Afterwards, he went to live at that very attractive spot, the Jaffrey house, a mansion that we may stand as sturdily for years to come as it has for more than two centuries past.

Time forbids my dwelling upon the many commotions that swiftly followed each other in Cranfield's administration: the dismissal of the assembly, the Jaffrey affair, the Mason land suits, the imprisonment of the Reverend Joshua Moody, the rebellion at Hampton, and the conviction and awful sentence of its ring-leader, Gove, for the crime of treason. Upon complaint made to the king, an arrangement was at last effected by which Cranfield withdrew in 1685, and later retired to the Barbadoes, where for some years he faithfully served his royal master.

All these events have, as the expression goes, passed into history, though as that history has been to a large extent written by clergymen opposed to the Episcopal faith, its statements will bear certain qualifications. New Hampshire owes to Jeremy Belknap a debt of gratitude for a work that in point of purity of style has nowhere been excelled. We can see that as a historian the writer tried to be impartial in narrating facts, to be just in stating conclusions, and charitable in imputing motives. When treating of Cranfield, however, Dr. Belknap does not stop at moderately emphatic terms of disapproval. "Vindictive," "cruel," "deceitful," "malicious," and other like adjectives are freely employed to denote the warmth of the historian's denunciation. "Cranfield's hypocrisy," he tells us, "is detestable."

One can scarcely dismiss a suspicion, that could the historian of New Hampshire return to-day in the flesh for the purpose of revising what he wrote more than a century ago, he would soften, at least some of these expressions. Dr. Belknap, it is proper to explain, had no access to the other side of the controversy. Letters written at the time and dispatched to England by

Cranfield, are now before us in print,—thanks to the energy and the liberality of a worthy son of Portsmouth, the late John Scribner Jenness.

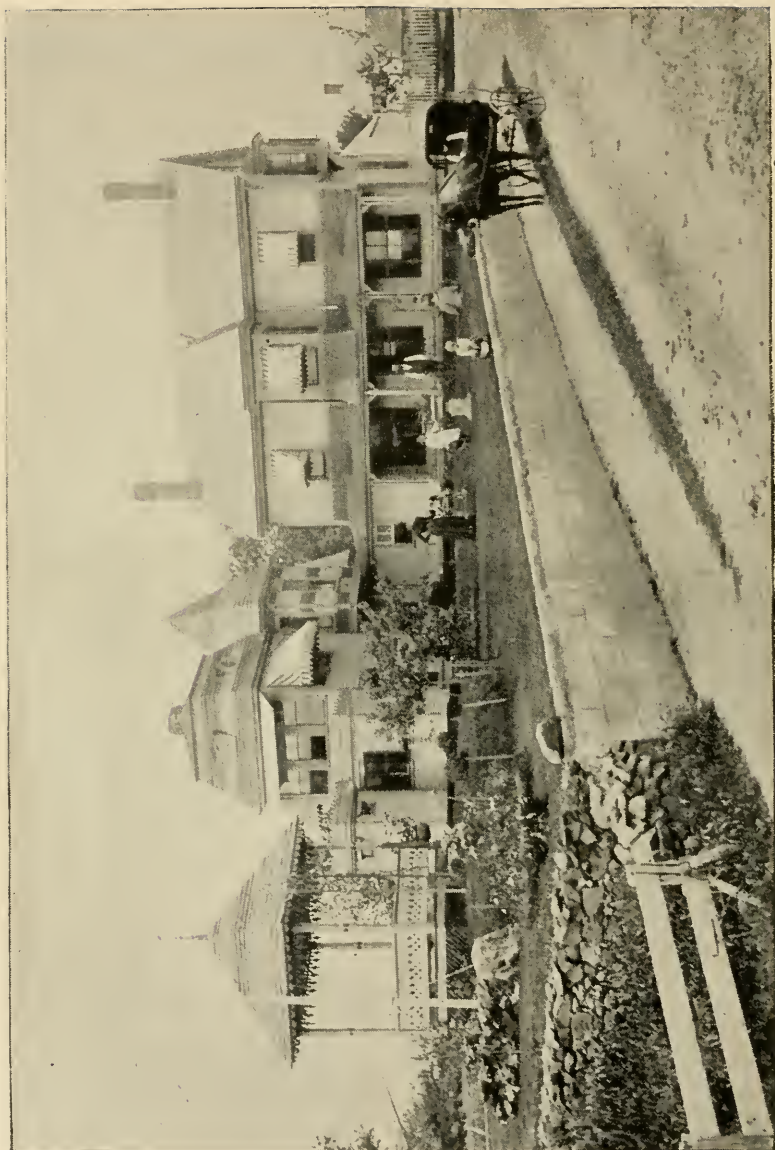
Cranfield, it is plain to see, was hot-headed and stubborn. He wofully lacked tact. He utterly failed to enter into the tone and temper of the people he had undertaken to govern. It may be that personally his manners were not agreeable, for he had not in his nature a particle of conciliation. Possibly it is true that he was disappointed at not making out of the office the money upon which he had counted. But like many an unpopular occupant of public station, Cranfield has been made to carry a heavy load of charges, for a part of which he is not justly responsible.



RESIDENCE OF HOWARD M. CURTIS.

Some day this striking episode in New Hampshire history will be written anew. Facts, some of them not heretofore consulted, will be thoroughly sifted. A picture will be drawn of those turbulent times, which shall do even-handed justice to all the actors, chiefest of whom is Cranfield. New Castle will furnish the background of the picture. The canvas stands ready for the artist.

As though the good people here had not had their fill of excitement, another kind of agitation occurred in Cranfield's day, that must have gone nigh to turning the island completely upside down. I refer to a stone-throw-



RESIDENCE OF THOMAS HAYWOOD.

ing devil, who played his pranks on the premises of our old friend, George Walton. Luckily for posterity (who always want an authentic account of the marvellous), the Secretary of the Province, Mr. Richard Chamberlain, lodged and took his meals at Walton's. Being an "ocular witness" and handy with the pen, Mr. Chamberlain was thoughtful enough to set down then and there an account of these violent activities, with the whizzings and snortings that accompanied the same. When Mr. Chamberlain went back to England, he gave to the world a little book, printed at London in 1698, and entitled "Lithobolia." It is a famous little book now. Cotton Mather heard of what was going on here, and he also has embalmed it in literature, written in his well known simple and lucid style!

Tremendous as was the event, it bore a character strictly local. The brickbats and the hammers, the pewter pots, and sundry other articles convenient for missiles, were hurled about nowhere else than within the boundary lines of Mr. Walton's real estate. Here, however, they freely circulated. Inasmuch as the demonstration had assumed a concrete form at a time when people were just recovering from the effects of a great fiery-tailed star, that had been blazing in the heavens, some of the wiser heads were sure that the devil, the comet, and Governor Cranfield had solemnly entered into an unholy league for the purpose of terrifying and harassing the Province of New Hampshire.

We of a later generation have reason to be proud of our stone-throwing visitor. To be sure, his name never got upon the tax-list, but we know that he stayed long enough in town to entitle him—if not to vote,—at least for ever after to hail from New Castle. No other incorporated community in the land (or in Europe either for the matter of that) can match us in this peculiar line. Moreover, though twice at least the black cat of witchcraft showed itself within our territory, it has left behind it, thank God, no stain of the gallows.

What single date may hope to awaken in us at this hour so lively an interest as that of the year 1693? The event distinguishing that year above the rest, we pay honor to by these commemorative exercises. All of us, I dare say, would like to know what the town of New Castle looked like just after it had been born. It is safe to say that it must have had every appearance of being a healthy child. I am admonished, however, that your patience has been taxed to such an extent by my attempt to bring before you some conception of how they started off in 1623 with their infant settlement, that there is really very little time left us to look at the infant town.¹

As for the christening, I am inclined to agree with Mr. Albee. He is good at guessing. This time I think he has hit the mark. The fort, as we know,

¹ From records of the North Church, Portsmouth, we know that in 1692 the families in the parish numbered 231: at Strawberry Banke, 120; at Greenland, 68; at Great Island, 43,—the families south of Sagamore Creek being classed with Greenland. The census of 1890 gives us a total of 488. In 1773 our numbers were 601. The highest figure, I think, that New Castle has ever attained, is 932, in the census of 1820. In 1880 the town had 610 inhabitants. Several towns in Rockingham county show a decrease of population in the last decade. One thing is sure; we are to-day escaping the evils of a redundant population.

was not infrequently termed the castle. It cost the rate-payers a pretty penny, too, to keep it in a state of what may be called "warlike posture." To judge from the frequency with which the subject figures in council and assembly records, the fort must have been always either actually undergoing repairs, or else deplorably in need of them.

It so happened, while our chief men were nearing the goal of their hopes, in their efforts to bring about a separation from Portsmouth, that a good deal was going on at the fort or *castle* in the way of making it as good as *new*. We can accept this plausible explanation, in default of a better.

The first town meeting was held on the 20th of December, 1693, in the old meeting-house that stood near the fort.¹ The honorable office of selectmen was conferred upon John Clark, James Randall, and Francis Tucker. John Leach was chosen constable.²

The limits of the present address do not admit of my entering into the details of our political town history. That is a subject that deserves to be treated by itself. Ample materials for a sketch, instructive as well as entertaining, are at hand in our local records.

The town-meeting is justly admired as the nursery and the conservatory of our liberties. The true democratic instinct here enjoys free, natural play. Every man meets his neighbor on a plane of equality, to discuss and decide questions of local concern. So far from being a mass of dry, dead matter, of no practical use to this busy age of ours, the recorded proceedings of our early town-meetings have much to teach us, illustrating as they do the steady growth and development, in its primary stage, of the foundation principles of self-government. Let me then invite your attention to the urgent need that exists for doing all that is to-day possible to put your town records into proper shape. The record that begins in February, 1756, ends abruptly on page 46 with the proceedings of a meeting 26th January, 1767. There are entries thereafter of meetings from 1800 to 1807, together with many pages of marriages and births. It can hardly be that one or two more books were not kept of the records from 1766 to 1800. These books may be in existence somewhere in the neighborhood. Let search be made for them. There are loose papers of various dates covering this period. They should be carefully examined and classified, ready to be copied into a book, if we do not find the missing volumes.

I regret to add that from 1856 to 1865 the records also are missing. Let us hope that these defects shall be remedied at as early a day as possible.

I feel, too, upon this occasion, that I may fitly urge you to guard these town books against all possible danger of future loss. Do not let it come to pass that fire destroy them. Not to you alone who live here; or to those whose lot it was to have been born here, are these old records of value. They are precious, and as the years pass, they will have grown more precious to thousands scattered over the country, who can trace back some ancestral tie that reaches New Castle.

¹ Albee, page 136.

² In 1793 the selectmen were Henry Prescott, George Frost, and John Tarlton. In 1893, they are Fred Bell, Ambrose Card, and Charles H. Becker.

To the foresight of some of our good townspeople do we owe it that the town has a transcript of the oldest book. This admits of the copy being deposited for safe keeping at a distance from the original. It is a wise precaution,—a kindness to posterity. Let the school children visit these records, and learn from them a lesson in history. Let us all look upon these pages as so many visible links binding us to the past. They who lived here two hundred years ago were not all *old* people (as one is apt carelessly to assume), but men, women, and children, of every age and condition. We simply have stepped forward to take their places. Soon we too will be gone. Let not the ancestor be totally forgotten upon the soil where once there smiled for him a happy home.

The first hundred years of the town, almost co-existent with the eighteenth century itself, brought in their train a varied fortune. The peaceful pursuits were the fisheries, or voyages along the coast, or to the West Indies. There were serious troubles with the Indians, and wars with the French, when New Castle manned the forts—(there had been a fort also at Jaffrey's point as early as 1665,)¹ or by night patrolled the shore from here to Little Boar's Head, or contributed her share of that product peculiar to the New England seaport towns—that half sailor, half soldier, and all fighter—to the taking of Louisburg.² There were coronations at Westminster, and changes of high officials at home. It was a gala day when a new royal governor was proclaimed. They would fire muskets on the parade at Portsmouth, and then the guns of the fort here would respond with a noisy salute. When the Earl of Bellamont was proclaimed in 1698, it took four gallons of rum with a due proportion of sugar, nutmegs, and limes (amounting to 1 £, 7 Shill., and 8d) to make the ceremony here at the fort pass off nicely. The receipt (not for making the punch, but in payment of the bill) is on record. What chiefly interests us, I think, is the apt name of the lieutenant who takes charge of these ingredients—Samuel Comfort.

Towards dark on the afternoon of the 13th December, 1774, a horseman rode in hot haste into Portsmouth. The king in council had passed an order prohibiting the exportation of gunpowder and military stores to America. The rider brought warning from the Boston committee of safety that a sloop of war had dropped down into the roadstead there, bound thither, it was thought, to strengthen Fort William and Mary. He was Paul Revere.

The next day the roll of drum had brought together men from all directions to the door of the state house. By three o'clock in the afternoon a band of about four hundred, headed by Captain Thomas Pickering, coming from Portsmouth, Rye, and New Castle, surrounded the fort here and demanded its surrender. Captain John Cochran held it with five men. He told the patriots on their peril not to enter. In his report the captain says,—“I ordered three four-pounders to be fired on them, and then the small arms, and before we could be ready to fire again we were stormed on all quarters.”

¹ XVII State Papers, 542.

² Among the names of New Castle men who took part in the siege are Captain Abraham Trefethren and Thomas Card. Henry Trefethren and Lewis Tucker lost their lives in this campaign.

Seizing and confining the captain and his guard, the invaders broke open the magazine and carried off a hundred barrels or more of the king's powder. This powder did service for the cause of liberty at Bunker Hill.

This exploit was followed up by a later attack, in which John Sullivan and John Langdon (both destined to become eminent) were leading actors. The party secured and brought away certain cannon and small arms.

This daring enterprise, in which your townsmen took part, assigns to the spot where we now stand a place of honor as the scene of the first overt act of rebellion in the colonies. New Castle is thus brought into the very foreground of the opening scenes of the Revolution.

You well know the story of Governor John Wentworth's coming hither to seek the shelter of the fort, and of the ships of war in the harbor. There are in the town office two letters written by the governor at that time to the selectmen of New Castle.

On the 13th August, 1775, the selectmen (John Simpson, Henry Prescott, and George Frost, Jr.) addressed the governor, stating that the town had kept a watch at night, and that "about Twelve o'clock last night they were attacked by a number of men from His Majesty's ship, the *Scarborough*, one of whom was taken and carried aboard, and another wounded." The selectmen pronounce it "a very extraordinary and alarming piece of conduct," and they ask that the man be released and set on shore. The governor promises to look promptly into the affair, with what result it does not appear.

On the 17th August, the governor requests the selectmen that he be supplied with provisions, for which he will pay, he having at least twenty in the family, and no communication with Portsmouth. The selectmen reply in a tone respectful, but spirited, as follows :

"May it please Your Excellency:

"In answer to Your Excellency's Letter of this Day we are sorry to inform you that this Town is so poorly furnished with Provisions of any kind that it is quite out of our Power to furnish your Excellency, and as the Communication is now stoped with Respects to the Transportation of Provisions from the Country to this Town it is not in our Power to procure more than a bare sufficiency for our own subsistence, all which we are obliged to go to Portsmouth for.

"We are Your Excellencies most obed^t. Hum^{ble} Servants

"John Simpson,

"Henry Prescott

"Selectmen of New Castle

"New Castle Augt: 17: 1775"

During the Revolution earthworks higher up the river were relied upon for the defence of Portsmouth. The fort here was left with but a handful of men. Captain Meshach Bell at one time had just six men under his command. In the War of 1812 it was fully garrisoned under Captain Marshal. In 1861 the state troops garrisoned Fort Constitution.

As an incident of the Revolution, it may be mentioned that on the 1st

December, 1777, a ship arrived here from Europe bringing Baron Steuben, who came over to aid us. To that gallant officer's wonderful work in perfecting the drill of the continental soldier was due, as you know, no small measure of our success.

On Monday, the 2d November, 1789, this fort gave a glad welcome of thirteen guns to George Washington, president of the United States, who was being rowed by in a barge. At this date Captain John Blunt, who had piloted Washington's boat across the Delaware on the memorable eve of the Battle of Trenton, was living on Blunt's Island. It is thought that Washington went ashore there to see Captain Blunt in his own home.¹

The military service required of the inhabitants of this town, it must be remembered, was promptly furnished at the fort. Yet there were those who enlisted and went forth to military duties in the field. Ten years ago there were living in New Castle one pensioner of the War of 1812, Abram Amazeen; and five widows of soldiers that served in that war,—Mrs. Mary White, Mrs. Hannah F. Vennard, Mrs. Grace Beal, Mrs. Mary Kinnear, and Mrs. Mary Lear. Mrs. Kinnear died at the age of 95 years and 9 months.

During the War for the Union New Castle contributed of her men and means. On last Memorial Day flowers and the flag that we love so well marked the spot where those lay sleeping at Riverside and at Tarltons who died in order that the Union might live. They number eight at the former and ten at the latter cemetery.

A full list of officers of the army who have been stationed at Fort Constitution would be interesting. I have not had time to prepare it. Of the commanding officers the following partial list is, I think, approximately correct: 1821, Major John B. Walbach; 1822, Captain Fabius Whiting; 1829, Captain Felix Ansart; 1839, Captain Justin Dimick; 1849, Major Charles S. Merchant; 1849, Captain Richard D. A. Wade; 1850, Major John M. Washington; 1853, Captain William Austine.

In December, 1853, Lieutenant-Colonel Washington and Captain Horace B. Field (who had been stationed here), of the 3d Artillery, were lost in a gale on the ill-fated steamer *San Francisco*, when four officers and one hundred and eighty men perished. As a boy I can remember the company marching up across the Parade at Portsmouth, on their way to Fort Columbus, New York harbor, thence to be transferred to the Pacific coast. Lieutenant Winder was among the saved.²

Colonel Justin Dimick and his family were long identified with New Castle and Portsmouth. I may also mention the fact that Major Robert Anderson, of Fort Sumter fame, was stationed here as first lieutenant in 1834-'35. Another officer was Francis Vinton, second lieutenant (1833-'36), who resigned and became eminent as the Reverend Doctor Vinton, of New York city.

Sergeant James Davidson, who had sole charge of the fort for many years,

¹ During their terms of office President Pierce came here in the *Wabash*, man-of-war, and President Arthur was taken through New Castle on his way to Portsmouth.

² His son, Lieutenant William Winder of the navy, was born at Fort Constitution.

deserves honorable remembrance. On the morning of the 2d June, 1855, the frigate *Constitution*, lying off this harbor, fired a salute. It was returned from the fort, the sergeant himself firing it alone. I can easily recall with what admiration, when a boy, I regarded the soldierly bearing of Sergeant Davidson.

New Castle in 1686 became a port of entry. The trade was then confined to the products of the forest—masts, planks, and staves,—the fisheries having been given over. Twenty vessels of 290 tons belonged to Great Island in 1681.

In 1839 the fishing business was very extensive. Fifty schooners were owned here in whole or in part. Captain Thomas Tarlton was a large owner. So was Captain Thomas E. Oliver. Other owners were the Bickfords, the Batsons, Whites, Curtises, and Amazeens.

Some years later the manufacture of shoes was carried on here for a while with some success.

In former times, when the fishermen were off at their business, political excitement occasionally dropped to a low ebb. A town meeting was duly warned for the last Monday in August, 1794, to vote for four representatives in the Congress of the United States. The following entry appears on the back of the warrant:

"Monday, August 25, 1794. The select men assembled at the meeting House agreeable to the within warrant but as no others came except Henry Prescott Jun'r, they thought best to depart without doing any business. *Henry Prescott, Town Clerk.*"

There has never been over much wealth in New Castle, and the sea-faring element has predominated. Boys did not go to college: they went to sea. New Castle's claim to men of distinction is a modest one.

Theodore Atkinson was chief-justice of the province. Colonel Shadrach Walton was a man whose career would have done honor to any locality. His great-grandson, Benjamin Randall, also a native, was a man of rare merit, the founder of the Freewill Baptist denomination. The first president *pro tem.* of the senate of the United States, the patriot John Langdon, was born in the town of New Castle. John Frost is the name of one of New Hampshire's best and most useful citizens. Sampson Sheafe was councillor for more than twenty years; Jacob Sheafe, his son, was born here in 1715. George W. Prescott (who died in 1817) was graduated from Dartmouth, became a lawyer, and was United States attorney for the district of New Hampshire. I am told that Harriet Prescott Spofford is of this Prescott family.

Now that a new era has dawned for New Castle, and summer visitors are more than charmed by its attractions, the town gets the benefit of some reflected light in a literary way. If the poet be neither made nor born here, he at least sojourns here awhile. John Albee is one of us. The Town Report shows that he is still in the sunshine of civic distinction, being number three on the board of education. Arlo Baker was a bird of passage, but Stedman and Barrett Wendell are of our summer population. The latter is identified with our home industries, for I understand that he keeps a literary work-

shop at full blast here in a little building hid away somewhere in the woody region of Frost Fields. Besides these whom I have named, as brilliant a historian as ever wrote English loves New Castle so well that he comes and dwells where on summer days he can from his window at Little Harbor look out upon the river view that he has so faithfully painted in a late volume of that fascinating series, "The Conquest of Canada."

There remain not a few subjects which for lack of time I am obliged to pass over without mention. The topography of the town, with special reference to territory once of incorporated New Castle, that now belongs to Rye or to Portsmouth; the bridges, early and late, and the means resorted to for raising funds wherewith to build them; the joining of Rye to New Castle in sending a representative to the General Court; the experiment of annexing Star Island in 1716, and how it turned out; the old custom of nightly hanging a lantern upon the flagstaff at the fort before a light-house was thought of; the long line of faithful ministers of the gospel who have labored here, not forgetting in this connection the Reverend Mr. Chase's negro man Cuff, "the saxton," who rang the bell and cleaned the meeting-house; the changes that followed the opening of The Wentworth, the enterprise of its owner in beautifying the grounds, sparing no pains to render it a summer dwelling-place worthy of the views one gains there, views that once seen are never forgotten. These, and many other topics, were full of interest could we bring them before us.

We have thus for a few brief moments contemplated the New Castle of the past. We have seen her the home of a sturdy, a frugal, a self-respecting people. We have seen her true to the traditions of her Anglo-Saxon, liberty-loving ancestry. We have seen her prompt in war; hardy and industrious in peace. We have seen in her annals the bright incentive to the maintenance of a high standard of activity for the future.

Let us in turn uphold her honor and dignity. Grateful that Providence has watched over and protected our whole country, let us for the new century upon which we have now entered look forward to blessings yet to come, in the full hope that as prosperity shall dwell within our borders as a Nation, so shall the Divine favor in no small measure continue to rest upon this good, old, island town of NEW CASTLE.

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